

The Encourager



St. Luke's Lutheran Church
"a church that encourages"

July 2023

(Deadline for the upcoming Newsletter submissions is on July 25th)

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Kristen Conner, president

Sara Mueller, vice-president

Rebekah Woodward, secretary

Pete Schmidt, treasurer

Emily Phillips, Lisa Rhyne, David Sweet, Jon Wolff,
Tom Ainsworth, Erin Pushman-Aldred

May Council
Minutes

Members are encouraged to bring any questions, suggestions,
or concerns to Council.

CONGREGATION & WORSHIP LIFE

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING DATE CHANGED

The Congregational Meeting that is normally held in July will be moved to
September 17th.



FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - July 2th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

SIXTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST - July 9th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST - July 16th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

EIGHTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST - July 23rd at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

NINTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST - July 30th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

Live streaming worship is available on our YouTube Channel.
Click on the button for the link.

[YouTube Channel](#)

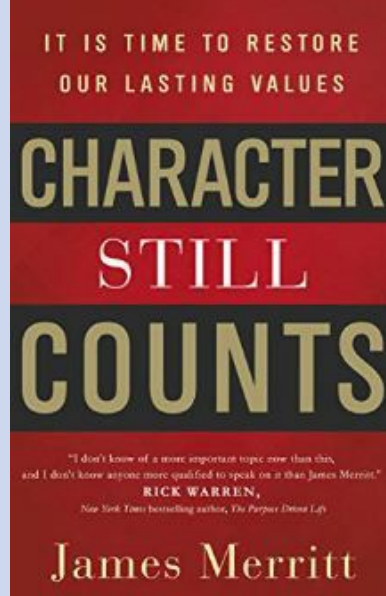
Click on the LIVE tab to see the videos.

WORSHIP NOTES THROUGH AUGUST

As The Father Has Sent Me

Overall Theme: Jesus appeared to the disciples who were hiding behind locked doors for fear of the world outside those doors. Jesus gave them peace. This peace was not as the world gives peace. Then Jesus breathed on them. He told them, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." We discover Jesus' mission not just in the "what" of his actions but the "how" of his life. It is found in the depth of his character. Jesus was sent into the world to represent the character of God through his life, death, and resurrection. Likewise, he sent the disciples and now sends

us by virtue of our baptism into Christ to embody that character in our lives and time. Pentecost is considered the Birthday of the Church as we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. In these next several months we are going to mine the scripture for the Character of God. In doing so, we will reflect on how this should impact our character we put out into the world. Using the categories identified by Dr. James Merritt in his book "Character Still Counts," we will seek to align our character so that as the Father sent Jesus into the world, we will now go in the same way.



July 2nd (5th Sunday After Pentecost): "Obedient From The Heart"

Character Trait: Self Control

Main Text: Romans 6:12-23 (Jeremiah 28:5-9; Matthew 10:40-42)

July 9th (6th Sunday of Pentecost): "Gentle and Humble in Heart"

Character Trait: Humility

Text: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30 (Zechariah 9:9-12; Romans 7:15-25(a))

July 16th (7th Sunday After Pentecost): "Accomplish That Which I Purpose"

Character Trait: Perseverance

Text: Isaiah 55:10-13 (Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23)

July 23rd (8th Sunday After Pentecost): "Do Not Fear"

Character Trait: Courage

Text: Isaiah 44:6-8 (Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)

July 30th (9th Sunday After Pentecost): "Smallest of All The Seeds"

Character Trait: Generosity

Text: Matthew 13:31-32, 44-52 (1 Kings 3:5-12; Romans 8:26-39)

COPELAND'S CORNER

**For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)**

Ecclesiastes reminds us that seasons were built into the creation. We are now in the season of Summer. This season provides us time for matters we might not have time to attend to in other seasons. It is a time we might find for vacations and travel. It is a time many can experience rest and renewal. It is a time for connecting with family often disconnected by the busyness of the other seasons. I pray this summer provides opportunity and time for things you may not have had time for in other seasons.

In this summer season, I invite you to **consider taking time to also connect with God in a closer and more intimate way. I invite you** to consider using this time for personal reflection on who you are and what you would like to do differently

when activity and demands pick up. What do you want to develop in this season that will bless your journey through all the other seasons? There is some information in this newsletter regarding our **engagement of Dr. James Merritt's book "Character Still Counts."** as well as **Bible Study opportunities through the Synod.** These are things you can bring with you in your travel to add in time for growth. When you are home or away, I pray you will still consider **worship an important part of your summer season.**

This is also a season for the church to explore things we might not have the time to do during the busy programmatic demands of the other seasons. During this season we will be **working on administration and recordkeeping** that includes ongoing work of changing our church management and financial management systems. We will also begin membership review.

Summer is an important season for reflecting on where we have been but also planning for where we are going in the upcoming seasons. **The Transition Team** is working on developing an **opportunity with our young families to engage and listen regarding their hopes and dreams for the future of St. Luke's Lutheran.** In August plans are being made for a **celebration of the journey (Heritage and History)** of this congregation to this point. In September there will be **a process designed to identify the verb (action) and noun (focus) of SLLC.**

There is a lot of work also taking place during the summer to **explore the future direction of the congregation and facility** in a way that leads to not only sustainability but also renewed energy and mission. God is providing options and resources not previously known in this search. Watch for more of these exciting developments. All of this is leading to **recommendations for the congregation to prayerfully consider and decide sometime in the late fall.**

Your continued prayer and support for the congregation is still needed as we engage this season and prepare for the seasons yet to come. Let us pray together:

God of all seasons, we give you thanks for this season of summer. We dedicate this season and all seasons to you. Use this season to draw us closer in relationship to you and to those with whom we are blessed to share this journey. Renew us and make us ready for the seasons yet before us. Prepare us in this time, ground us in your love, excite us with your possibilities and then send us forward in your grace. We pray all this in your precious name. AMEN

DISCOVERY CAFE FINAL REPORT

Thanks to the Transition Team and all those who participated in the three Worship Café's during May and early June.

They were a valuable time of renewed relationship and exciting conversation. Printed full reports will be coming soon once the Transition Team adds their observations and any comments and we add a report from the Families Gathering being planned to engage our young families. Large Poster Boards with the summary are in the Narthex along with printed copies that include the Word Clouds are on the table.

This report will be used in the development of the Ministry Site Profile (Resume of the Church), shared with the synod in identifying candidates to match and with pastoral candidates in the search process.

Click the buttons below for summary reports.

Identity Cafe Report

Gifts Cafe Report

Focus Cafe Report

NC SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2023

The 20223 NC Synod Assembly gathering, held in Greensboro, NC on June 2 & 3, was the bi-annual business meeting. During the event, attendees were provided valuable information about Synod core values, the many outstanding ministries led by the synod staff, as well as providing the setting for budget proposals, voting for several Synod positions and resolutions.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church was represented by Jan Brauer, Terri Wells and Pastor Keith Copeland.

Below are the main topics of the Assembly:

Core Values:

Christ Centered

- The living Word, Jesus Christ, is the very center of all we do. In Jesus Christ, we experience God's grace and are set free to be God's beloved in this world.

Generosity

- There is enough; there is more than enough. We will trust God's provision for tomorrow. With gratitude for what God first gives us, we live and give generously today.

Relationship

- Just as we belong to one body in Christ, we belong to each other. Inspired by the gospel, we will choose to live and work together for the sake of the world.

Reconciliation

- God's deep desire is to reconcile all relationships – with each other and with creation. We will actively strive to experience the fullness of God through radical welcome diversity, justice, compassion, peacemaking, advocacy, and healing.

Voting:

Budget and Mission Support

Compensation Guidelines

Synod Constitution Update

Elections:

- 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Voting Members
- Synod Secretary
- Synod Council

Resolutions:

- Roth Tax Option for ELCA Rostered Leaders
- Access to Abortion in North Carolina -

To access details about the events at the Synod Assembly and any related documentation, please visit the NC Lutheran Synod website at www.nclutheran.org There is a link to the 2023 Synod Assembly that contains all the details about the events, voting and special activities during the two-day event.

We encourage you to browse the site and learn all about the event and any upcoming events that may interest you.

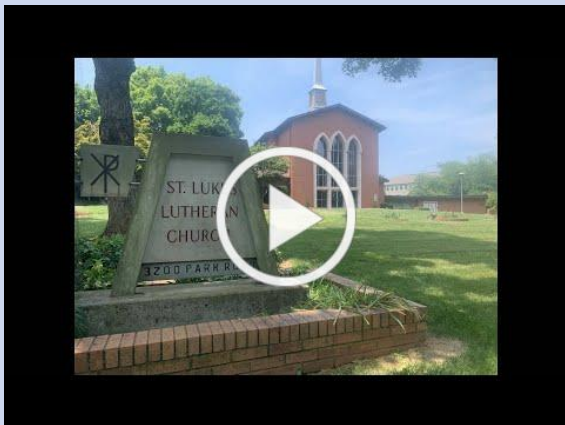
Blessings,
Terri Wells

CONFIRMATION 2023

Congratulations William Miles Micci, Sara Kathryn Gilliland, Aaron Edgar Safrit and Lorelei Nicolle Schlick on your confirmation!

May the Almighty bless you with His wisdom and knowledge.

Lorelei who is living in Switzerland was able to join us through Zoom.



NOISY OFFERING

In June we collected for:



**CRISIS
ASSISTANCE
MINISTRY**

This month we will be collecting for:



This organization supports families with children who are born with a rare neuromuscular disorder that causes fixed joints and missing and weak muscles in many areas of the body.

We have had the privilege of watching Gaila Fosbinder, who was born with AMC, and her mother, Julie, as they navigated their journey through many surgeries and years of physical therapy. Today, Gaila is a beautiful, successful young woman. We are in awe of her determination and transformation which is nothing short of a miracle. Your noisy offering in July will go to support other families on their journey to overcome the obstacles of AMC.

Click on the button below for more information about AMCSI

AMC Support Inc.

FLOWER CHART IN THE NARTHEX

If you would like to beautify our church sanctuary, honor someone, or commemorate a special day, please add your name to the chart!

We are now using Starclaire House of Flowers. They can be contacted at 704-553-2435. Payment is by credit card or check in advance to the florist.

Remember to tell the florist the date you are giving.

Call Ami-Luise at the church office at 704-523-7981 or email office@stlukeselca.org with the information you would like put in the bulletins by Wednesday morning of the week you are giving.

If you have any questions, call Pam Moser at 704-552-0996. Thanks!

HONOR AND
REMEMBER WITH
**ALTAR
FLOWERS**



JULY BIRTHDAYS



Did we miss your birthday?

Email us
or
call us at
704-523-7981
so we can update our Birthday List.

Email the
office

- 4 Jane Huber
- 5 Steve Hubbard
- 6 Earl Schmitke
- 10 Jessica Behm
- 11 Karen Lyons
- 13 Charlotte Fairman
- 14 Eva Franz
- 17 Neil Sidlovsky
- 19 Terri Wells
- 20 Lynn Sidlovsky
- 24 Jan Brauer
- 24 Sara Gilliland
- 24 Seth Lachacz
- 25 Fernando Shine
- 26 Gary Williams
- 29 Cynthia Shine
- 30 Ben McCall

Katharina Circle

The Katharina Circle will be meeting on

Anna Vee Circle

The Anna Vee Circle will not be meeting this month.
Please reach out to circle members with any questions.

Lutheran Men In Mission (LMIM)

Will be on Summer Break till September.

If you need minor repairs, changing out smoke detectors, batteries, and transportation needs, please contact the church office and we will get you in touch with Tom Frick.

The LMIM gents want you to know they are available for odd jobs with their "Congregation/Community Help Program".

ST. LUKE'S HAPPENINGS!

FAMILIES OF YOUNG CHILDREN LET'S TALK

It was clear how important our families with children are to this family of faith through the Café conversation. It is also clear that we were missing much of that voice in our conversations. We also recognize how much our families have been impacted in these last years. The Council and Transition Team would like to identify a time when we can come together and look forward to what St. Luke's can become. We want to reconnect and rediscover the joy of being church with your family and as Christ's family.

To identify the most effective time for this conversation, we are asking you to fill out preferences for day and time through this Doodle Poll. Once we know when, we can focus on creating a gathering just for our families with children.

Imagine what we can be and get ready to explore that together!

[Doodle Poll Availability](#)



NEXT STEP IN TRANSITION PROCESS

As things kick up in the fall, so will we on this transition journey.

Here are some things to look for:

August Celebration of Heritage: Plans are in process to make August a celebration of the journey and stories of SLLC throughout the years. It is important to remember and celebrate all that has brought us this far. We give thanks for the saints that have led the way. It is the same God that began this good work who will continue to bring it forward.

September – “Finding the Verb Process”: Rob Bell in his book “*Love Wins*” stated that “everything around us is a noun. It takes a verb to make a noun dance.” We are going to discover the action of this congregation and the noun we would seek to dance with.

The statement is:

The Mission of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church is to _____ God’s _____.

The fun will be filling the blanks together.

We will do this by:

- **Future Story Home Gatherings:** There will be six gatherings at different times and in different homes during September to share imagination for the future.
- **Finding the Verb Congregational Event:** Following worship we will gather to identify the Verb and Noun of the congregation followed by lunch together.
- **Council Elements Meeting:** The council will take some time to identify three elements that guide the dance between the verb and noun.

All of this is included in the Ministry Site Profile which describes the congregation to the synod and potential pastoral candidates.

ADMINISTRATION UNDER CONSTRUCTION

During the summer months, there is work on making our administration clearer and more efficient. There have been some changes in our staffing model as well.

Here are a few of the things being addressed in our administration:

Change from Realm Church Management to Breeze (Tithely All Access)

- Much cheaper and easier to use for current church situation.
- **Online Giving Platform** is much easier to learn and use.
- Volunteer Management and Engagement is much more helpful.
- All Access Package Special Pricing with many products to help the church and

special pricing for ELCA on package and fees

Change from Realm Accounting to QuickBooks Online By End of the Year

- Much cheaper
- Industry Standard making it easier to find potential staff in future
- Makes it easier to work remotely.
- Direct connect with Breeze online giving (no double entry)

Counting Process and Recording of Giving

- Offering will be counted by Teams on Sunday Morning (Began in June)
- Ami will input the records in Breeze

These changes in management are being rolled out in a way that we hope will cause the least amount of disruption. We are building the new system, making sure it matches with Realm and operates efficiently before moving out of Realm. It will require double entry for a short period of time but is important to make sure things go smoothly. **Watch for more information coming about Online Giving and other benefits from the changeover.**

SLLC FACILITY & FUTURE PLANS

At the beginning of the year, the council made a promise to the congregation to return with estimates on two proposals being considered to sell all or part of the facility. Since that time, there has been a new opportunity being discussed with the potential for the church to retain ownership of the property but place it under management of a not for profit. This not for profit would manage the facility for use by a cooperative of not for profits as well as other community activities. This opportunity is being explored in three focus areas:

Focus One: What and How to Develop the Not-for-Profit Management?

- Working with UNC Greensboro Classes
- Feasibility Study and Business Plan Development
- Manage a Cooperative of Not for Profit and Community Activities

Focus Two: What needs to be done to prepare for this?

- Building Needs
- Salary for Executive Director
- Other Costs

Focus Three: Consolidating the presence of St. Luke's in the building.

- Move offices closer to the sanctuary.
- Clarify needs of congregation for space now and for growth.

Lots of research and conversation is going into these three focus areas. As we do, there are resources we did not anticipate prepared to help. God is leading this! Our task is simply to be prepared to step forward with God's plan. We are not standing still but we are also on God's timeline.

**No decisions will be made without the consent of the congregation.
Please pray for this season of discovery and then get ready to
prayerfully discern together.**

MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

The Church Rolls are more than names on a page. They represent a relationship and responsibility. The process of review is more than taking names off the rolls. It is an opportunity for clearly defining that relationship and responsibility of the congregation to each other. It is important in the call process for anyone coming to have a clear idea of who SLLC is. This process will be done transparently.

We will be asking for the help of the congregation in this review.

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

Celebrating 10 years of "God's work. Our hands."

On Sunday, Sept. 10, congregations of the ELCA will join together for our 10th annual day of service. "God's work. Our hands." Sunday began in 2013 in connection with the ELCA's 25th anniversary and continues to be a day to celebrate who we are — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

More information will be coming out!



CRAFTING WITH BEN

Marilyn Schuster volunteered at Ben McCall's group home to help the guys make a heart of art.

She also learned how to play corn hole and even scored. Ben and his friends at the Easter Seals UCP Ashcraft group home appreciate the cards, dinners and visits from the St. Lukes Family.

Thank you for keeping Ben in your hearts.

Vanessa and Ryan



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We need to expand our
Live Stream Team

This would also be a great opportunity
for high school student to get involved
and earn volunteer hours.

Any questions or to sign up please
reach out to the church office and ask
for Ami-Luise.



Email the
Office

**HUGE *THANK YOU* to Chris and Nicole Behm
& Ami-Luise for keeping this going on Sundays!**

FROM TOM AINSWORTH

I'm confused. When I was in law school we were taught in both Evidence and Trial Procedure classes never to ask a question of a witness you don't already know the answer to. Sage advice since you don't want some unexpected answer to come back and bite you in the ass! Example #1 -- Lawyer's question to his client in a divorce decree proceeding: "Mrs. Client, after you and your husband separated

from each other, when was the last time you had sexual relations?” Client’s answer to her lawyer: “Why Mr. Lawyer, don’t you remember? It was an hour ago in your office before we came here to court!” On the other hand, we’re constantly being told in countless classroom discussions, work meetings and instructional seminars, “Don’t be afraid to ask questions, that’s how you learn-- there are no stupid questions!” Hmmmmmm, I’m not so sure about that. Example #2 -- An American tourist is driving his rental car, hopelessly lost in the middle of rural Ireland, with a road map of the country in his lap, trying to figure out how to get to Dublin. He arrives at a small village and spies an elderly man sipping his ale at a table outside of a local pub, and figures that this guy should be able to tell him. He pulls up, gets out, approaches the gentleman and asks “Excuse me sir, can you tell me the fastest way to get to Dublin?” The old man thinks for a while and then asks the American “Are you walking or driving?” The tourist looks puzzled, and says “Driving of course!” The old man replies “Well, that IS the fastest way.” Obviously these two situations are different, but each bears the same lesson -- make sure the question you’re asking is phrased in a way to get the answer you are looking for. Don’t get angry or frustrated with the wrong answer, since you asked the question and in both examples the answers are actually correct. Learning to ask a question in the right way ends confusion.

2023 SUMMER READING PLAN

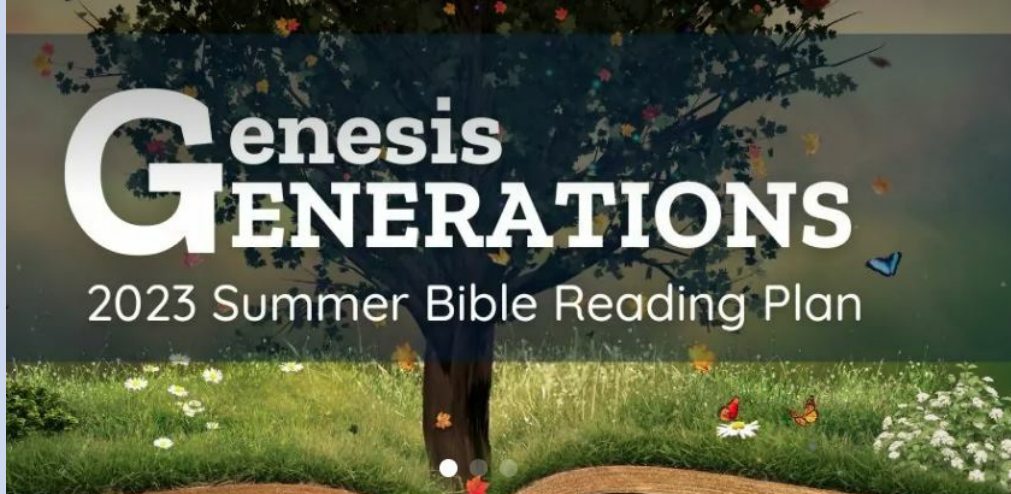
Join folks all across the synod as we read the Bible together—individuals, congregations, small groups— using the 2023 Summer Bible Reading Plan: Genesis Generations!

You'll read together a section of Genesis, a short devotional writing, a few questions to ponder, and a prayer. Devotions are written by NC Synod pastors and lay people. The readings begin on **Sunday, July 2**, and continue through Chapter 25 of Genesis. (This summer's cliff-hanger will continue with Genesis Generations II in Summer 2024.)

Participate in a number of ways:

- Receive the daily readings in your inbox,
- Watch for each new reading on the website,
- Listen to each daily reading via the podcast,
- Stay tuned to our socials for glimpses of the readings, and
- *New this year: respond creatively in some artistic way.

[Sign Up
Here](#)



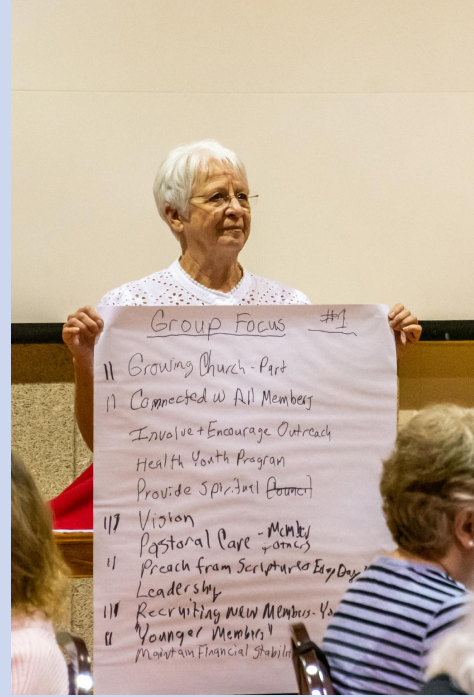
BAPTISM OF CARTER EMERSYN REGAN







**FROM BEHIND THE LENS
OF "MR.TERRY" CHEVILLE**









IN NEED OF AN ELLIPTICAL?

Elliptical is looking for new home.

FREE to new home but PICKUP is a MUST!

Please reach out to Ami-Luise at amiluisevucovich@gmail.com



OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

LOAVES AND FISHES

Thanks to everyone who is donating, our last drop off was
36 pounds of food!

We are continuing to collect items to our neighbors in need.
You can bring items on Sunday or during office hours.



Priority Needs

- ☐ **Canned Meat: Tuna, Chicken, etc...**
- ☐ **Canned Fruit: low sugar or in juice**
- ☐ **Pastas - Canned or Dry Boxed**
- ☐ **Diapers - especially larger sizes**
- ☐ **Low Sodium Canned Vegetables**
- ☐ **Peanut Butter**

No Glass Please

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF COFFEE

I saw God in my coffee this morning. Before you think I've gone Shirley MacLaine on you, let me tell you about Gustavo.

Gustavo lives in Latin America and in his younger days, he sold his labor to a large coffee grower. The large coffee grower kept the profits, but Gustavo didn't earn enough money to support a family.

Through Lutheran World Relief programs and with the help of a co-operative, Gustavo now owns his own land and grows coffee on his own sustainable farm using environmentally friendly methods. Working together, the farmers get better prices for their coffee.

Gustavo shares in the profits and is able to support his family. His children and grandchildren have a future.

Lutheran World Relief receives 80 cents from the sale of each pound of coffee and uses that to help other farmers around the world.

Gustavo's coffee is available online at LWR Farmers Market Coffee. Click on the button below. Why don't you order some and let me know if you can see God in your coffee too! – Rebekah Woodward



LWR Farmer's Market
Coffee

Assist M.E.

We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low income, uninsured patients in our community.

Assist M.E. is a non-profit [501c(3)] organization in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low-income, uninsured patients in our community. Assist M.E. gets wheelchairs, bedside commodes, walkers, shower chairs, and other medical equipment from individual donors and organizations.

If you have any unused, or gently used medical equipment to donate, simply call our church office 9-12:30pm M-F to make arrangements to drop your equipment off so that it may be reused by someone in need.

Visit Assist M.E.
website

FAMILIES IN CRISIS NEED YOUR HELP

Your love will reach your neighbors who feel so alone as they continue to fight for their lives.

You'll provide frightened, cold and hungry children, mothers and seniors with:

- Shelter from the deadly cold with beds, pillows and heaters.
- Warm meals and clean water.
- Mobile medical clinics that provide health care, critically needed medical supplies and mental health support for PTSD and trauma.
- Essential supplies, like soap and toilet paper.
- Comforting quilts made by members of our caring Lutheran family.
- Love, support — and most importantly — hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Click on the button below and connect to the website enabling you to contribute directly and your offering will flow swiftly to where it needs to go.

Lutheran World Relief

